

FORM B – BUILDING

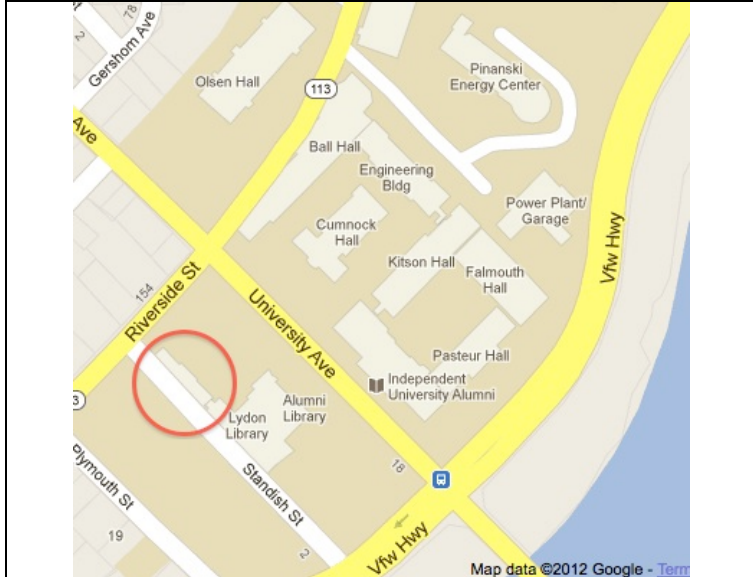
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



View from northeast (University Ave.): East façade and north elevation

Locus Map



Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero, preservation consultant

Organization: UMass-Lowell

Date: August 2012

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

5480-84

LOW.4008

Town/City: Lowell

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Pawtucketville

Address: 35 Standish Street

Historic Name: Eames Hall

Uses: Present: dormitory

Original: dormitory

Date of Construction: 1948

Source: plaque on building

Style/Form: Colonial Revival

Architect/Builder: Krokyn & Browne; Geometrics, Inc.
(alterations)

Exterior Material:

Foundation: granite veneer over poured concrete

Wall/Trim: brick with cast stone trim

Roof: asphalt with gravel ballast

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Replacement window sash and doors; new window openings on upper floors of rear pavilion (all L 20th – E 21st c); center pavilions on front and rear modified (ca. 1965)

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage:

Setting: Located at west end of UMass Lowell's North Campus, on a block also containing two library buildings and a new academic building under construction. Faces the main pedestrian and vehicular thoroughfare of University Ave., with dense residential development to the north. Attached to Lydon Library on the south.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
SEE ATTACHED NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT FORM.
If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Eames Hall stands at the back of its largely flat site, just east of the former Standish Street, which now serves primarily as a driveway. A large grassed lawn framed by street trees occupies the front of the site, while a parking lot occupies the northern end of the block. On its south end, the building is now attached to Lydon Library.

The building rises four stories above a raised basement to a flat roof. Clad in Flemish-bond brick, the rectangular building is 18 bays long and five bays deep, with slightly projecting pavilions centered on the east and west elevations. The Colonial Revival styling features a molded brick water table above the raised basement; concrete window sills, quoins, belt courses, flared lintels, and keystones at the first floor windows; and concrete tablets between the first and second floors and in the brick parapet. The 2nd floor windows are trimmed with gauged brick lintels with concrete keystones. All windows are rectangular, typically with double-hung replacement vinyl sash, typical.

The entrances on the east façade and west elevation each contain a recessed doorway with flared concrete lintel and keystone, and a modern metal and glass door; the east façade also features a tall flight of granite steps. The north elevation features a low doorway, at grade, with gauged brick lintels and a concrete keystone, and double-leaf metal and glass doors; the opening has been widened beyond the original lintel. A small circular window with brick trim and concrete keystones at the compass points is centered over this entrance. The west (rear) elevation is notable for its bands of horizontal windows on the upper floors of the center pavilion, and its areaways to utilitarian basement entrances.

The front and back pavilions of the building have been significantly altered, probably in the mid-1960s. A building permit was issued in 1965 for unspecified work on both Eames and Smith Halls; Geometrics, Inc. of Cambridge was the architect. Ca. 1950s photographs show the center pavilions of Eames ornamented with a light-colored parapet and a vertical center bay, also clad in a light-colored material, capped by a pediment.

Eames Hall is a capable yet minor example of mid-20th century dormitory housing, its flat, repetitive facades distinguished by unusual attention to cast concrete detailing. Replacement window sash, modern door units (including an enlarged side entrance), and the alteration of the center pavilions of the front and back elevations detract from the integrity of the original design.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Eames Hall is located on the North Campus of the University of Massachusetts Lowell, on the northern bank of the Merrimack River. This campus originated as the first permanent home of the Lowell Textile School, which was founded in 1895 and opened in 1897, in rented space in downtown Lowell, with 32 day and 110 evening students. The Lowell Textile School was one of four such institutions authorized by the state legislature in each of the state's major textile manufacturing cities, for the purposes of advancing the textile sciences and training skilled workers, engineers, and managers.

Originally supported by tuition and contributions from local mills, the school was totally funded by the state beginning in 1918. In 1928, the school's name was changed to the Lowell Textile Institute; it became the Lowell Technological Institute in 1953, reflecting new programs in plastics, paper, leather, and electronics. In 1975, Lowell Tech merged with Lowell State College (originally the Lowell Normal School), forming the University of Lowell. In 1991, the combined institution became part of the University of Massachusetts system.

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The surrounding Pawtucketville neighborhood is a largely residential area that was densely developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, paralleling the growth of Lowell's textile industry. The Moody Street Bridge was opened in 1896, followed by increasing multi-family housing and small shops along this thoroughfare (now University Avenue). The core quadrangle of academic buildings was constructed at the east corner of University Avenue and VFW Highway in the early 20th century; several acres of adjoining land were used for athletic fields. After World War II, new technologies and a large increase in students led to new science programs, graduate courses, and steady expansion of the physical campus, which has spread east and west from University Avenue.

A new campus plan initiated by principal Kenneth Fox envisioned expansion immediately north of the original quadrangle, at the corner of University Avenue and Riverside Street, and on the undeveloped block directly opposite, on the west side of University Avenue. Smith and Eames Halls were built on the latter site in 1948, flanking the slightly later Alumni Memorial Library (1949); they were the school's only dormitories until 1967. A single building permit, dated February 1947, covers both Eames and Smith Halls, which are generically listed as "Dormitory #1 and #2". Eames contained single and double bedrooms, study rooms, and lounge areas. The architecturally-similar Smith Hall had a cafeteria in its basement. (Smith Hall [LOW.4006] was recently demolished to make way for the new EITC building, presently under construction.) Eames Hall was named after Charles H. Eames, an electrical engineer and graduate of MIT (1897), who served for 39 years (1906-1945) as second principal of the Lowell Textile School.

Krokyn & Browne, a Boston architectural firm, developed the first post-war master plan for the Lowell Textile School site, most of which was yet undeveloped. They also designed all three buildings realized on the block between University Avenue, Riverside Street, and Standish Street, and most of the buildings constructed in the 1950s on the former athletic fields north of the original quadrangle.

The firm consisted of Jacob Frederick Krokyn (1881 ca.-1960) and Ambrose Browne. Krokyn graduated from the Harvard School of Architecture in 1905, moved to San Francisco and participated in rebuilding after the earthquake of 1906 there, and worked for the Federal Housing Administration in Washington, D.C., during the first World War. Reportedly the first Jewish architect in the city, he established his own firm in Boston in 1919. Early in his career, the firm name was Krokyn, Browne & Rosenstein; at the end it was known as Krokyn & Associates. Krokyn's work included a multitude of building types—theaters, commercial and office buildings, the Motor Mart Garage in Boston (BOS.2380), residential buildings, and several synagogues. These were executed in a range of styles, from Colonial Revival to Art Deco and Moderne to the International Style. The latter included one of the firm's most notable designs, the Hillel House at Boston University (233 Bay State Road; 1953).

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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



View from northwest (Riverside Street): North and west elevations

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National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- ☐ Individually eligible ☒ Eligible **only** in a historic district
☒ Contributing to a potential historic district ☐ Potential historic district

Criteria: ☒ **A** ☐ **B** ☒ **C** ☐ **D**

Criteria Considerations: ☐ **A** ☐ **B** ☐ **C** ☐ **D** ☐ **E** ☐ **F** ☐ **G**

Statement of Significance by Wendy Frontiero

The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

Built in 1948, Eames Hall was the first building constructed by the Lowell Textile Institute (formerly the Lowell Textile School) in its post-World War II master plan, which encompassed dynamic physical and academic expansion. Eames was constructed as one of a pair of residential buildings—the school's first dormitories—flanking the new Alumni Memorial Library. Notable architectural features include red brick walls with concrete quoins, window trim, and cornice molding, and concrete tablets between the first and second floors and at the roof parapet. Intelligently conceived yet blandly executed, major alterations to its original entrance pavilions detract from the building's integrity.

Eames Hall is eligible for the National Register as a contributing structure within a potential Lowell Technological Institute district. This district would encompass the original quadrangle buildings of the Lowell Textile School, whose construction began in 1901, and the heterogeneous yet complementary array of new buildings constructed around it in the 1940s and 50s, during which time the school was renamed the Lowell Technological Institute. The cohesive ensemble is distinctive for its role in the textile manufacturing history of Lowell and in the development of public institutions of higher education in Massachusetts. The Lowell Technological Institute campus possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling, and meets criteria A and C of the National Register on the local and state levels.